

## HUMAN RESOURCES FOR TREATING NEW CANCER CASES IN CHILE

### Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to describe the human resources needed in Chile to treat new cancer patients. The population of Chile is approximately 17.423 million (8.61 million men and 8.81 million women) and the estimated number of new cancer cases in Chile for the year 2012, based on GLOBOCAN data for Chile as a whole (<http://globocan.iarc.fr/>) was 40414 (20363 in men and 20051 in women) (Table A).

The five most common cancers in Chile are (1) urological (bladder, kidney, prostate and testis), (2) breast, (3) stomach, (4) colorectal and (5) lung.

Table A: The ten most frequently occurring cancers in Chile for men and women based on 2012 GLOBOCAN data.

Cancer	BOTH SEXES		MEN		WOMEN	
	Incidence	Rank	Incidence	Rank	Incidence	Rank
All cancers excl. non-melanoma skin cancer	40414		20363		20051	
Urological	8652	1	7814	1	838	9
Breast	4081	2			4081	1
Stomach	3712	3	2449	2	1263	7
Colorectal	3582	4	1663	4	1919	3
Lung	3127	5	1790	3	1337	5
Hematological	2934	6	1600	5	1334	6
Gynecological	2832	7			2832	2
Gallbladder	2280	8	667	6	1613	4
Head and Neck	1674	9	555	8	1119	8
Pancreas	1152	10	523	10	629	10
Liver	1090	11	561	7	529	11
Brain, nervous system	886	12	460	11	426	12
Esophagus	798	13	525	9	273	13

Newly diagnosed cancer patients need pathology, surgery, chemotherapy and/or radiation therapy. The number of oncologists needed is based, therefore, on the number of patients requiring pathology, surgery, chemotherapy and radiation therapy (Table B). This number is estimated from the percentage of patients requiring surgery, chemotherapy and/or radiation therapy for the top ten cancers in both men and women.

For developing countries the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) recommends training Radiation/Clinical Oncologists who can prescribe both radiation and chemotherapy for the common solid cancers, instead of separate medical and radiation oncologists. Hematological malignancies are treated primarily by hematologist-oncologists. The number of specialists needed is based upon the number of cancer patients but each city, in order to ensure coverage if one person leaves or goes on vacation, must have at least 2 surgical oncologists, 2 radiation/clinical oncologists, 2 hematologist oncologists, etc.

Table B: Number of Oncologists needed for Chile’s 2 most populous cities based on 2012 population estimates (<http://citypopulation.de/>) and 2012 GLOBOCAN data for new cancer cases.

	Population	New Cancer Cases	Hematologist Oncologists	Surgical Oncologists	Radiation / Clinical Oncologists	Urologic Oncologists	Gynecologic Oncologists	Pathologists
Santiago	4912500	11395	2	11	57	6	2	23
Puente Alto	573935	1332	2 <sup>‡</sup>	2	7	2 <sup>‡</sup>	2 <sup>‡</sup>	3

<sup>‡</sup>At least 2 are needed in each city.

In addition to oncologists, support staff such as onco-pharmacists, pharmacy technicians, oncology nurses and palliative care specialists is also needed. Many cancer patients require hospitalization for diagnosis, treatment and/or complications, therefore an adequate number of oncology beds will be needed. The number of oncology nurses, onco-pharmacists and pharmacy technicians needed is based upon the number of beds occupied daily by cancer patients while the number of palliative care specialists is based on the number of new cancer cases per year (Table C). The oncology nursing staff for each 24-bed oncology unit (operating 24 hours a day, 7 days a week) comprises of one head nurse and a nurse specialist as well as 13 nurses working 8 hour shifts, 5 days per week.

Table C: Number of Oncology Units, Nursing and Pharmacy Staff needed for Chile’s 2 most populous cities based on 2012 population estimates and 2012 GLOBOCAN data for new cancer cases.

	New Cancer Cases	Maximum # of beds/day	# of 24 bed oncology wards	Onco-Pharmacists	Onco-Pharmacy Technicians	Palliative Care Specialists	Oncology Nursing Staff other than Radiation Oncology Nurses
Santiago	11395	199	9	36	54	23	135

Puente Alto	1332	24	1	4	6	3	15
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Since many cancer patients require radiotherapy, appropriately equipped facilities will be needed along with radiation oncology staff (Tables D and E). Radiation oncology staff includes radiation therapy technicians, medical physicists, Linac engineers and radiation oncology nurses in addition to radiation/clinical oncologists. The minimum radiation therapy equipment requirements are at least one of each: Linac, brachytherapy unit, CT simulator, treatment planning computer and dosimetry/quality assurance package.

Table D: Radiation Therapy Staff needed for Chile's 2 most populous cities based on 2012 population estimates and 2012 GLOBOCAN data for new cancer cases.

	New Cancer Cases	Radiation / Clinical Oncologists	Radiation Therapy Technicians	Medical Physicists	Linac Engineers	Radiation Oncology Nurses
Santiago	11395	57	76	26	7	26
Puente Alto	1332	7	9	3	2 <sup>y</sup>	3

<sup>y</sup>At least 2 are needed in each city.

Table E: Radiation Therapy Equipment needed for Chile's 2 most populous cities based on 2012 population estimates and 2012 GLOBOCAN data for new cancer cases.

	New Cancer Cases	Linacs / Co 60 Megavolt Units	# of Brachytherapy units	# CT simulators	# of treatment planning computers	# of dosimetry/QA package
Santiago	11395	13	7	7	7	7
Puente Alto	1332	2	1	1	1	1

NOTE: Guidelines from the IAEA of the United Nations were used to calculate the radiation therapy equipment and staff needed in the setting of a developing country. Guidelines from the Oncology Nursing Society were used to calculate the number of nurses needed. Several other specialty societies were also requested to provide guidelines but in most cases there were none, therefore colleagues active in those fields were consulted for estimating the number of staff needed.